

CHRISTIANITY and *CRISIS*

A BI-WEEKLY JOURNAL OF CHRISTIAN OPINION

Volume 1, No. 4.

March 24, 1941

\$1.50 per year; 10 cents per copy

America and the Peace After the War

THE isolationist senators want Britain to state its peace aims before we promise any further help. We do not want to aid in putting out the fire until the imperiled neighbor assures us that he has plans for a new fireproof building, which will obviate the necessity for our aid in the future. The neighbor answers our importunities with the not unjustified plea that he is too busy with the fire to elaborate his plans for future fireproof construction.

Yet the answer is not quite satisfactory. One difficulty about this war is that the democratic cause has been too consistently on the defensive, not only in a military, but in a political and moral sense. We want to save what is decent in our civilization against worse alternatives. This defensive task is not illegitimate. Yet it may prove futile, if conceived in too negative terms. It is right to try to prevent the tyrannical unification of the nations. But if we fail to achieve a democratic international order, the western world will sink back into anarchy and our last estate will be worse than the first. Furthermore, there is a question whether the democratic nations can vanquish Hitler if they do not give their cause more positive content. Victory will depend to some extent upon the readiness of subject peoples to undertake the hazards of rebellion against Nazi oppression in due time. The possibility of such uprisings must depend partly upon the degree to which the military might and morale of Germany has been corroded by the strains of war. But it also depends upon the spirit of resolution among subject and oppressed nations.

Important sections of British opinion fully understand the importance of this issue, both from the standpoint of winning the war and of achieving a victory worthy of the sacrifices required to attain it. The thought of the churches on this issue is being ably guided and expressed by the Archbishop of York. Influential leaders in the ranks of all three parties are also pressing the point and seeking to overcome the nation's natural but dangerous preoccupation with its immediate task.

There is, however, a curious irony in the American

demand that Britain state her peace aims. For the fact is that there is no possibility of sketching even the barest outlines of a post-war world order without some knowledge of what kind of responsibility America will assume for the establishment and maintenance of such an order. There is fairly general agreement among realists that American responsibilities for Europe must be limited. Any effort to draw America fully into the hazards of European politics is bound to result in an isolationist reaction as profound as the one which followed the first World War. Yet the European and the world problem can not be separated. The problem of a new order in Europe can be solved only within the context of the larger problem—that of achieving a new level of political interdependence which would be compatible with the economic interdependence of all the nations of the world in a technical civilization.

The most powerful nation on earth can hardly evade that issue. If it does evade the issue, it cannot plausibly place the onus of defeated hopes on Britain alone.

It is very important that this issue be thought out, not in terms of abstract ideals and utopian plans, but in terms of the necessary next step whereby the traditional autonomy of the nations will be abridged sufficiently to lay the foundation for a new comity of the nations. It is the problem of organizing and regulating power, both economic and military, on an international scale, so that it will yield a tolerable justice, rather than either anarchy or tyranny. This is a job for neither perfectionists nor cynics. Both those who abhor the use of power and those who imagine that the imposition of force alone can create justice or peace will confuse the issue.

The demand of the isolationists for a statement of British peace aims has a tragic as well as an ironic touch. For the fact is that both the British and the American governments are afraid to say too much about peace aims, lest they arouse isolationist sentiment to new fury. There is a justified fear that a nation which is not yet certain about its immediate

responsibilities in a chaotic world may renounce a budding sense of responsibility if long term obligations are fully disclosed. Recognizing these perils, the statesmen have decided that it is better to take one step at a time.

We say there is a note of tragedy here. Europe

can hardly win the war if the peace for which it strives is not given a more positive content. But Europe also needs the help of America; and a definition of what is involved in a constructive peace might easily frighten American isolationists to retreat once more into the storm-cellar of irresponsibility.

The Aftermath of Utopianism

LEWIS MUMFORD

I. The Retreat from Responsibility

ONE of the difficulties about the present war is this: people have never faced with candor the issues and results of the great World War. Our contemporaries read *Under Fire*, *All's Quiet on the Western Front*, *The Road to War*; they brooded over the horrors and tortures of fighting; they became acutely conscious of the ineptitudes and blunders committed by the victorious powers, and in particular, they recognized the implacable selfishness of the ruling classes. But they lost sight of what the war itself was about; what it actually *did* achieve, and what it eventually *could* achieve.

Even those who had entered eagerly into the World War did not as a rule survive the shock of the post-war deflation. They had hoped for a new heaven and earth to descend from the skies; and when they found that they had only cleared the ground for the City of Man, they were unprepared to survey the site or to set the cornerstone. The two decades that followed the first World War will be known to posterity as a period of ebbing energies and dwindling hopes. Its efforts for peace and co-operation were half-hearted: there was a general retreat from responsibility, symbolized at its worst by the passive non-committal observers the United States sent to the League of Nations.

The agreement to treat the World War as an altogether disastrous and meaningless episode in the life of mankind was a bad preparation both for facing the duties that rose out of the war, and for avoiding the present repetition—this time with the odds heavily weighted against freedom and democracy, by reason of the very cynicism which was encouraged by that agreement. But why did this mistaken judgment become popular? Why was this retreat from responsibility all but universal? Why did the war leave only an image of vindictive imbecility on the minds of most people; so that those who were on the victorious side were ashamed of their cause and looked back sheepishly to their participation, as to a dementia that had unaccountably seized them?

These questions are worth asking; for they cast a light on our present weaknesses. The answers will, I think, bring out a fatal naivete in the social and ethical philosophies that still govern the behavior of most democratic peoples; and in particular, the more enlightened, the more humane, the more liberal groups.

For a dozen years after the war I shared many of the typical attitudes of my generation: our beliefs were symbolized by the polemics and the predictions of Randolph Bourne. So I am entitled to speak with candor about the sins of the post-war generation: in part they were my own. Bourne had prophesied a permanent disaster from America's participation in the war; he thought, in contrast to Thorstein Veblen and John Dewey, that it would bring an end to all social progress here. His view proved false. Many evils indeed accompanied the war and persisted long after it had ended. But the worst disaster of all was not the direct result of fighting: it was the consequence of our withdrawal from social and political responsibility. America's participation in the military struggle had given us the right and the duty to take part in the establishment of a more just and stable world order. But we refused. Perhaps the greatest catastrophe of the war was that those who emerged from it accepted, consciously or unconsciously, the romantic defeatism that Bourne had preached in 1917.

My generation, old and young, smug and cynical, was wrong; it expected too high a reward for its virtue and sacrifice; and it was prepared to give too little. Above all, it failed to understand the task that history had given it; and it thus did not rise to the demands of peace as those who had been maimed or killed had risen to the demands of war. In an orgy of debunking, my generation defamed the acts and nullified the intentions of better people than themselves. If only to prevent a similar miscarriage of effort from happening today, it is important that we should understand the reasons for that earlier failure.

II. Great Expectations

Those who attempt to account for the disillusion and cynicism that followed the World War usually think they have accounted for everything if they refer it to the Treaty of Versailles. They contrast the high hopes and the ideal expectations that had been enunciated by Woodrow Wilson with the terms of the treaty. And they find in that contrast an excuse for the bitterness, the apathy, the resentment, the indignant sense of betrayal that followed.

But this explanation is more in need of an explanation than the fact it supposedly explains. Did people reject the war itself because the Treaty of Versailles was not a perfect treaty? Or because they discovered, by May, 1919, that the politicians who pieced the treaty together were not saints and philosophers? Or again, was it because they suddenly discovered that the moral and humanitarian claims of the Allies were disfigured by the rankest sort of national egoism, and by undisguised lust for economic and financial power? When one examines the attitude that grew up among the democracies as to their own share in war and peace, one discovers that a great part of the disappointment arose out of the illusions they had nourished about human nature and society. The mistakes that were committed in the peace treaties were due to conflicting economic interests, to political ignorance, and to sheer stupidity and chicanery. But the people who were appalled by these things did, apparently, hope for a peace treaty that would, after six months' conference, be perfect: they did indeed believe that capitalism, enormously over-stimulated by war production, would affably bow itself into oblivion and permit the Bolshevik revolution to spread; they did indeed hope that national egoisms, swollen to the bursting point by the very act of fighting, would suddenly dissolve, and permit a quick, worldwide cooperation.

These were singular hopes and expectations. They suggest that the liberal and progressive groups in the democratic countries had told themselves a fairy story. They indicate that people expected more to be achieved through the peace treaty with regard to international affairs, than had been heretofore achieved through peaceful education and cooperation within any one country. Unfortunately, in 1919, the world was full of pert young men who believed that in less than six months, immediately on top of a war of unparalleled brutality, rancor, and violence, a perfectly just and generous treaty could be composed. These indignant people did quite as much to sabotage the post-war political tasks as the most vindictive isolationists, like Senator Lodge. They formed an unholy alliance with the forces of reaction, comparable to that formed in our own day between the groups of the extreme right and those of the extreme left.

In short, the war-weary countries were full of yearning utopians who looked upon Woodrow Wilson as a savior, capable of transforming the souls of his contemporaries. But Wilson's fellow-statesmen were limited men, who saw in the great leader only what he actually was—another limited man. The war generation was bitterly disappointed because their Moses did not lead them into the Promised Land; but that disappointment was highly premature. Moses's followers were forced to endure forty years of wandering in the wilderness: the utopians were not prepared to endure forty months.

III. The Dogma of Human Perfection

What was the source of this wishful utopianism? What brought on this long period of morbid disillusion? The answer lies a long way behind the first World War: it lies in the social and religious philosophy that became popular in democratic countries from the eighteenth century on. Though the war itself, with its ugliness and its heroism, temporarily displaced this utopianism, the latter attitude finally had its revenge.

For the last two centuries the liberal and humanitarian groups in the Western World have been governed by two leading ideas. One of them was the belief in mechanical progress, more or less openly accompanied by the conviction that there was a positive relation between material improvements and moral perfection. The other was the belief that, through the free use of the human reason, the world was ripe for a sudden transformation that would establish peace and justice forever.

The first of these ideas buoyed up the capitalist classes and gave a sort of missionary fervor to their most routine activities. The second set of beliefs accompanied all the reformist and revolutionary movements of the nineteenth century; its promise of social salvation had a millennial undertone even in the prophecies of Marx, for whom the classless state was a final resting place which suspended all the dialectical movements and oppositions that preceded it. The first doctrine was gradualist; the second was apocalyptic. Both rested implicitly on a third doctrine, the dogma of the natural goodness of man. Theologically speaking, the last belief is, of course, the Pelagian heresy.

According to this belief in natural human goodness, the purpose of social reform is to shake off evil institutions and restore man to the primeval paradise in which he could once more "be himself." The self, as such, was above suspicion. Rational men, once they are in possession of the facts, will act in accordance with reason on behalf of the common good: given enough rational men, one might enact the millennium; or, if one needed force to effect the change,

the need for it would disappear as soon as the last king was strangled by the entrails of the last priest.

This optimistic belief in the automatic reign of reason found steady reassurance, from the eighteenth-fifties on, in the succession of improvements that took place in mechanical industry; the perfection of machines and the ennoblement of man seemed parts of a single process. Did not Mark Twain, a naive mouthpiece of the age, couple the birth of the "steam press, the steam ship, the steel ship, the railroad" with the emergence of "man at almost his full stature at last"? Though rational invention was not nearly as automatically beneficent in its general social applications as the utilitarian philosophers proclaimed it to be, the sense of power that was derived from conquering space and time and commanding great energies spread into every department of life. If machines could be improved so easily, why not men? In Bellamy's *Looking Backward*, that typical mixture of humanitarianism and mechanism, utopia is voted in at a Presidential election.

None of these hopes was altogether absurd if one accepted the basic premises. Before 1914, people watched the spread of socialism from country to country, without the faintest tremor of suspicion that socialist ends might become the excuse for the most savage despotism, as in Soviet Russia, or that socialist means might become the agents of barbarous and archaic ends, as in Nazi Germany: in both cases, a hideous travesty of rational hopes. Only reactionary writers like Dostoyevsky were acute enough to predict that a humanitarian materialism might result in Shigalovism (*The Possessed*). That human nature might go wrong, that people might consciously cultivate barbarism and restore torture, was before 1914 unthinkable; indeed, so unthinkable that those who still cling to this older ideology in its original purity will not let themselves admit the existence of barbarism and torture today.

On the same humanitarian premises, again, it was equally difficult to accept the war itself. Into this world of mechanical progress and human amelioration, the World War came like a baleful meteor from outer space: a meteor that landed, not in a Siberian desert, but in the midst of a populous city. What was shocking about the war was not merely that it cut across the path of social improvement. What was even more dreadful, from the standpoint of rational utopianism, was that it brought into action emotional drives, animal loyalties, irrational surges, outrageous capacities for bloody exploit that had long been hidden from popular view: acts that were supposed to belong to the unenlightened past. Man's complete nature, not his rational side alone, now became visible. Plainly he was a creature with greater capacities for good and evil than the utopian had pictured. In war, he reached sublime heights of

heroism and self-effacement; he also sank to depths of brutal egotism and animality that only the dregs and outcasts of society had explored.

The discovery of man's seamier nature was to many people a deep humiliation; what is more, it contradicted many of their most sacred beliefs and hopes. But instead of understanding themselves better, they made the war bear the burden of their frustrated idealism. If this barbarous ordeal was to justify itself to reason, it must become the repository of all men's idealisms. If the war were not to mock them forever, it must produce the rainbow; and the rainbow must also point to an authentic pot of gold. Unless all this was assured in millennial terms, the whole business was just a futile horror.

IV. *The Fallacy of Absolutism*

In short, a good part of our contemporaries accepted the World War on condition that they should be given, for fighting through it, a free pass on an express train to the Promised Land. Their desires for the future were in proportion to their shock and outrage over the brutal present. For them, only an absolute good could justify such an absolute evil.

Need I point out the twofold misconception? First: the war itself was not in its outcome an absolute evil. Those who opposed Germany's tribal plans for conquest, though not guiltless themselves of exploiting economically a domestic no less than a colonial proletariat, nevertheless stood on their records as the exponents of far more humane and cooperative and democratic methods of government than Germany exemplified. Germany had not undergone the liberating processes of the English, the American, and the French revolutions: hence the German government, backed by a long line of German thinkers from Luther to Fichte and from Treitschke to Houston Chamberlain, stood for conquest as a mode of life, and the beast of prey as the pattern for a conquering ruling class.

Compared with Germany, the Allies stood for universal principles of justice: principles that would eventually liberate India, Africa, China, no less than the internal proletariat of their own countries. The immediate result of the Allies' victory was the restoration of dismembered Poland, the redemption of submerged Czechoslovakia, the liberation of the Baltic states from Germany's recent conquest, the lifting of the yoke of slavery from Belgium, and finally—not least—opportunity to throw off the incubus of Junker military rule from the new republic of Germany itself. All these were beneficent results; they prepared the way for a more cooperative international society.

The second misconception was the belief that the peace treaty, to justify the high aims that Wilson had

uttered, must be absolutely good; that only a perfectly just peace, without stain, without blemish, without human error, could justify the four long years of slaughter. This belief in an absolute good is the fabrication of people who have no understanding of the human personality, of the processes of human society, of the inevitably relative and mutable quality of all human effort. For the kingdom of absolutes is not of this world; human life knows only partial or momentary fulfillments. The post-war settlement was full of specific evils and specific goods. On the whole, the goods greatly overbalanced the evils, because a method of cooperation and the beginnings of a system of effective public law between nations had been laid down. If the mechanism of the League of Nations was feeble and imperfect, it was no worse than the Articles of Confederation which came out of our own Revolutionary War.

The notion that the World War had been fought to no purpose by the Allies and in particular by the Americans—who might have stayed out of it—is false both in theory and fact. Life presents one with innumerable situations in which one's most strenuous acts and duties produce nothing good: at most by taking up one's burdens, one keeps something worse from happening. A surgical amputation is not in itself good; it is a frightful evil; but it is usually preferable to the complete loss of life. A flood is an evil that might often be prevented by human foresight; but once the flood breaks, salvage and rescue become one's duty; and one does not help matters by crying out loudly against the Legislature's failure to provide reservoirs and reforestation belts in time.

So with the World War. Its long list of negative results is no proof whatever of its unreason or its purposelessness. This was an irrational solution of unbearable military and political tensions that had been forming for fifty years. Had Germany accepted repeated British offers of cooperation, the war might have been averted: that choice lay in human hands. But once the war itself had broken out, the duty of decent, intelligent men was to keep this irrational event from being pushed by a German victory to an irrational conclusion: a conclusion in which power alone would triumph over reason and justice. The Treaty of Versailles did not fully succeed in this aim; but one has only to compare it to the German-dictated treaty of Brest-Litovsk to realize that both wisdom and justice were preponderantly on the Allied side.

To perform the duty of resisting collective aggression, it is not necessary to hold that the morally worse cause is altogether evil, or that the better cause is wholly pure. When one helps one's neighbor to resist the assault of the gangster, the assault itself is open evidence of the relative merits of the two

parties; even when one is ignorant of the gangster's history: but one need not deceive oneself as to the moral beauty of one's neighbor's character. The fact that he needs succor does not prove he is a saint; and the fact that he is not a saint does not establish one's right to withhold succor. In helping one's neighbor one vindicates the dignity of the human soul, in its refusal to submit to unreason and injustice. No reward has been promised for such an action; no reward can be demanded. But a penalty is attached to non-action in such a situation; for a human society in which men will not help their neighbors to resist evil and struggle for justice, will presently cease to exist as a society, since it will lack even the animal loyalties that are necessary for survival.

The second point against the argument that no good came out of the World War is that two tremendous results, both potentially beneficent, did indeed come out of it. One of them was the world-wide disgust and hatred for war, as an instrument of asserting and enforcing the will of nations. The hatred became so deep in the common people of the world that it has already had a fatal result: it has caused them to treat peace as an absolute good and to surrender to evil, rather than to resist it at the price of war. Thus this salutary reaction against war has lent itself to perverse manipulation by the totalitarian tyrants: Hitler has boldly exploited its capacity for demoralization.

The other great positive result of the war, achieved in the very act of fighting, was the world-wide cooperation against the Central Powers. This was a unique event in mankind's history. It made possible the League of Nations, and had the United States accepted its share of responsibility as a world power—even to the extent that it is now belatedly doing—it might have made possible a far more effective union of mankind than the League of Nations. This was no small triumph. It was the first recognition of the fact that mankind had, for practical no less than for religious purposes, become a working unity. Hence aggression and injustice in any part of the planet must eventually be a threat to law and order and peace in every other part of the planet. Through this worldwide cooperation, the Central Powers were defeated by a moral as well as a military coalition.

Here was an occasion for profound rejoicing. Its moral meaning and its further political uses should never have been lost sight of in the years that followed.

Apart from all the particular goods that did in fact come out of the war, these two larger results would, if carried through, have justified the tragic sacrifices that men had made. But because our more idealistic contemporaries hoped for an immediate, wholesale regeneration of mankind, they shirked the

further duties and further renunciations that the situation demanded. What is worse, in order to justify to themselves their own irresolution and irresponsibility, they cast the blame wholly on the diplomats, the capitalists, the munitions manufacturers—as if the natural and inevitable conduct of these people did not precisely constitute the great challenge of the post-war situation. So the outraged utopians held that since perfection was not achieved, nothing whatever was achieved; and that since low aims as well as high ones had characterized the victorious powers, the high aims were non-existent, and the low ones alone had reality.

V. Moral for the Present

The natural letdown that followed the World War was debilitating enough in itself. But such a letdown is almost the inevitable physiological result of the hypertension and superhuman effort such a great crisis demands. What made the letdown worse was the fact that the results of the war were measured, not against human probabilities, not against the dire results that would have followed a German victory, but against "ideal" results, born out of exorbitant hopes and expectations, founded on a juvenile conception of human nature. A good part of the liberal gullibility about the achievements of the Russian revolution, in the face of its patent tyranny and totalitarianism, was due to the fact that, having been cheated of an absolute at home, the utopians needed a surrogate heaven which they could worship at a safe distance.

Unfortunately, the spirit of utopianism has not yet been exorcized. It still continues to infect much of the thinking that has been done about the present war. And it is therefore necessary both to see its mischievous effects in the past and to anticipate them once more in the future. Unless we head off these false hopes, lazy wishful attitudes, and perfectionist illusions, we will continue to defeat all our legitimate expectations and deplete the moral energies we will badly need to achieve the relative goods that will be open to us.

We must remember, to begin with, that the immediate aftertaste of the present war will, without doubt, be repulsively bitter, even if the Axis powers should be decisively beaten, beyond any possibility of their plotting a second comeback. Consider the peoples of Europe; peoples who have been bullied and blackmailed, robbed and raped, bombed and tortured and enslaved, who have been flung here and there like so much rubbish, peoples who have been betrayed by their Quislings and Lavals, and who have been ruled by the cold sadists that Himmler has created for his universal inquisition. The sense of intolerable wrong and outrage felt by the people who

come under the totalitarian rule will not at once disappear. If their hearts are to be softened, the Germans must show a capacity for repentance commensurate with the wrongs they have inflicted: an attitude of humble contrition that they gave no sign of, as Friedrich Foerster reminds us, after the last war. Humility, contrition, repentance will probably not come quickly in a land where the human soul has been barbarized and defaced to the extent that has by now happened in Germany.

In the meanwhile, the democracies, if victorious, will be condemned to take over the ignominious duty of policeman and jailer, exercising a strict vigilance, not only over millions of Nazi gangsters, well-hardened in crime, but over large tracts of the earth that have become barbarized and demoralized by the actions of these people. We must not expect the victims of Nazi rule to shake hands with those who have terrorized them: on the contrary, we must make allowances for the resentments the totalitarian governments have awakened, and we must not be unduly impatient when hot hatred or uncharitable impulses of revenge stand in the way of rational plans and reorganizations. We cannot expect more of the peoples of Europe than actually came from our brothers in the South after their country had been overrun by Grant and Sherman. And if it took fifteen years to get rid of the poisons generated politically in the first World War, it will probably take twice that time to recover from the present conflict. Only charlatans will promise a quicker recovery; only inveterate sentimentalists will let themselves even privately hope for it.

With similar realism we must face the demand for immediate world peace and world disarmament. I mention this matter here because the failure to fulfill the original promise of disarmament is often taken as one of the most outrageous breaches of international promise that followed the Versailles Treaty, and as one of the great failures of the League of Nations. Even so astute a statesman as President Roosevelt has repeatedly publicized the view that world disarmament must take place after the present war. If "after" means during the next twenty years, the demand is based on a serious misconception. The fact is that security, under law, is bound up with the existence of force; as law becomes more universally observed, more habitual, the need for force is diminished, though never entirely removed. Disarmament is not a cause of security; quite the contrary, security is the condition of disarmament. Not merely must one disarm the gangsters and bandits before one can establish the reign of international law; one must be careful *not* to disarm those who will be responsible for keeping the gangsters from building up another racket.

Before universal disarmament can take place, the states of the world will have to submit to the reign of law. They must embody their desire for law and justice in an ordered international government, with an executive, a legislative, and a judicial authority; and this government must be capable of superseding the wills of individual groups and states. Disarmament cannot precede the establishment of a world authority; and since the working out of a planetary organization is an extremely complicated and difficult task, the maintenance of armaments by the democratic states who will serve as a nucleus for world order is vital to the success of a peaceful constitutional regime. Disarmament can proceed as fast as the non-democratic states transform themselves into constituent republics, obedient to international law: no faster. On any other terms, disarmament is an invitation to banditry and a pledge of insecurity.

The moral of this should be plain. The end of the present war must not repeat the pattern of the World

War; and to avoid that tragic error, we must banish the spirit of immature utopianism that proved so self-defeating when the first great catastrophe was ended. If the ideal goals we must work toward are to be achieved, we must be prepared for a century of resolute struggle. There will be delays, mistakes, mismanagements, weaknesses. Unless we take these things in our stride—along with the human partialities and prides that threaten all good efforts—we will be disheartened once more with the nature of the materials with which we have to deal and we will once more shrink from the burden of responsibility.

When the war is over we will not enter utopia; we will pass into the next phase of life. Such goods as we achieve will not be ultimate and absolute: they will always be relative; and we shall be in danger of losing them at the very moment they seem most secure. There are no final solutions to human problems: what seems a final solution is only the courage to take the next step.

The World Church: News and Notes

The Russian Sunday

The Supreme Soviet published a decree last summer abolishing the six-day week and returning to the regular seven-day week with an obligatory holiday on Sunday. The Godless leaders protested against this innovation, it is now reported, on the ground that it would give prestige to the Christian Sunday. Their protests were disregarded and Professor Nikolski wrote an article in the Godless paper, *Besbojnik*, explaining that since the country people kept Sunday in any event, it was not advisable to choose another day of the week as the official holiday. An analogy is seen by some observers between the reinstitution of Sunday and the decree of the First Consul in France which abolished the Republican calendar.

It is also significant that permission is now granted to workers to absent themselves from work on Easter and Christmas day and that religious tests have been abolished from civil service examinations. These retreats on the anti-religious front are interpreted partly as an effort to conciliate technicians who are still devoted to the historic religion.

Christianity and the Revival of Nationalism

In both Denmark and Holland there is an intimate relation between a revival of Christian feeling and the expression of national sentiments. Since both are suppressed in each country by the occupying authorities, the more covert religious vehicle is used to make these feelings articulate. In Denmark this combination of national and religious feeling takes the form of increased interest in, and veneration for, Bishop Grundtvig, who was both a religious and national leader. He is achieving a symbolic significance in Denmark similar

to that which attaches to the name of John Huss in Czechoslovakia.

In Holland the same phenomenon in the religious and national sentiment of the nation is apparent. In this case it is William of Orange who symbolizes the intimate relationship between Christian faith and national values to the Dutchmen. Recently a Dutch pastor warned against the danger of subordinating the Christian to the national interest in this return to piety. He declared: "The gospel which has been entrusted to us is the gospel of the Kingdom and not the gospel of the Kingdom of the Netherlands."

Thus the living reality of contemporary history testifies to Christianity's creative involvement in history and its transcendence over all immediate problems of history. An emphasis upon purely one or the other aspect of the gospel leads to idolatry on the one hand and to sterility on the other.

Korean Missionary Enterprise Imperiled

The Protestant missionary work in Korea, which dates from 1884 (though Scottish missionaries from Manchuria visited Korea before that time), is in the gravest peril. The situation has become increasingly difficult for the missions ever since Japan took over Korea and embarked upon a program of forcing the Japanese language and culture upon the Koreans. Difficulties resulting from the Japanese program, coupled with the financial depression in the sending countries, reduced the number of missionaries from a total of 598 in 1925 to 462 in 1938. It must be observed, however, that during the same period the number of communicants grew from 112,000 to 148,000, thus indicating the robust vitality and initiative of the Korean Christians in spreading the Gospel. About three-fourths of the for-

eign missionaries are from the United States, the other fourth being from Great Britain, Canada and Australia. The American missionaries for the most part represent the Presbyterian and Methodist Churches.

Recently increasing pressure has been put upon Korean Christians by the Japanese authorities. As a result many foreign missionaries have been persuaded that it is not expedient to remain in residence. The Methodists have withdrawn in larger numbers than the Presbyterians, partly because they were identified with the Korean Methodist Church more intimately than were the Presbyterians with the Korean Presbyterian Church. A general evacuation of Methodist foreign workers has taken place, with only four or five remaining in the field. The Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. has asked its workers to remain as long as any opportunities for useful service remain open to them.

Strong advice from the Department of State hastened the departure of many of those from the United States, especially women with young children, elderly persons, those not in good health, and those looking forward to early furloughs. Numerous arrests of pastors and church workers constituted a final stimulus for the departure of still other North American missionaries. Those missions having the largest percentage of evacuees have left a few individuals to supervise property and to attend to other business matters. Sixty-four missionaries of the Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A. are still in Chosen (February 21, 1941). Much of the institutional work still goes on, but in a larger measure than ever before under Korean supervision. The National Christian Council of Korea has been dissolved and Korean Churches have become affiliated with those of Japan. Korean Christians carry on as best they can under the stern control, close oversight, and ideological pressures of the Japanese, but still with friendly helpfulness and constructive personal contact on the part of the reduced missionary body.

CHRISTIANITY AND CRISIS

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion
601 West 120th Street New York, N. Y.

\$1.50 per year

10 cents per copy

EDITORIAL BOARD

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

Chairman

JOHN C. BENNETT

CHARLES C. BURLINGHAM

JOHN A. MACKAY

RHODA E. McCULLOCH

FRANCIS P. MILLER

EDWARD L. PARSONS

HENRY P. VAN DUSEN

A missionary recently returned from Korea writes: "The determining factor (in prompting the decision to leave Korea) was that we had reason to believe that those in authority did not regard neutrality on the part of the missionary as enough. They expected positive support for the so-called 'new order' in Eastern Asia. In addition to this they expected us to give positive support to the totalitarian systems after the agreement was made with the Axis powers. These two things we were prohibited by training and conviction from doing.

"Secondly, we found that our presence was a source of difficulty and danger to Christian friends whom we had learned to respect and dearly love. We were not comfortable in the awareness of the risks they ran when they associated with us. Thirdly, we were repeatedly and urgently requested to withdraw by representatives of the United States government."

The Vatican Disavows Germanic Religion

The Vatican radio recently broadcast an address on the Christian religion and its relation to Germanic religion. The address makes the following significant distinction:

"Religion founded on revelation is the only perfect knowledge of God. It has to be made clear that it is not the blind forces of Nature, or the iron necessity of Fate, which is revealing itself in our conception of God, but a personal, supernatural, spiritual Being, with self-consciousness and self-responsibility.

"The personal God, as the supreme spiritual Being, addresses Himself to us through three intellectual presuppositions: self-consciousness, intellect, and will. The foundation of religion, therefore, is not our intuition but our spiritual understanding. In order to understand the language used by God in His revelation, men need intellect and free will. If the so-called 'Believers in God' (*die Gottgläubigen*—this is the name used for those Germans who are members of the so-called *Deutsche Glaubensbewegung*) repudiate the Jewish-Christian conception of God based on the prophecies, and attempt to replace this conception by a belief in a non-personal creative strength of Nature, or in the almighty power of iron fate, they fail to realize what an ignominious accusation they raise therewith against the Germanic race. They contend nothing less than that the Germanic race is incapable of making its members experience any perfect form of religion, and that those belonging to the Germanic race are incapable of realizing the genuine character of God or man. It is, however, fortunate that science, philosophy and theology are defending the Germanic race from such a debasing indictment."

Introductory Offer to End Soon

The special introductory subscription rate of \$1.00 per year (\$1.25 Canadian and foreign) will come to an end on April 1st. After that time the subscription rate will be \$1.50 at home and \$1.75 abroad.